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ABSTRACT

An unexpected demographic development in the United States in the 1970's was the shift of nonmetropolitan areas to net inmigration, reversing a 70-year trend. Using the 1970 definition of metropolitan, the percent of the population living in metropolitan areas fell from 69% in 1970 to 67.8% in 1978. No easily identifiable set of reasons explained a majority of moves between metropolitan areas, between nonmetropolitan counties, or between metropolitan and nonmetropolitan destinations. While 53.1% heads of household moving from metropolitan areas to non-adjacent nonmetropolitan counties reported employment-related reasons, such reasons accounted for less than one half of the migration within the entire U.S. Family-related reasons explained between 15.6% and 19.4% of the four types of migration, and various housing and neighborhood considerations explained another 7.1% to 15.8% of moves. The momentum to population growth in the nonmetropolitan sector resulted from the interaction of net migration and natural increase. Net inmigration of persons in their reproductive years may boost rates of natural increase in later periods, causing nonmetropolitan areas to continue to have high rates of population growth. At present the U.S. is still metropolitanizing, but only because of population growth in nonmetropolitan areas and their fusion into existing adjacent metropolitan areas. (NEC)

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SPECIAL DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSES

CDS 80-2

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SPECIAL
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ANALYSES

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Migration to Nonmetropolitan Areas:

Appraising the Trend and Reasons for Moving

Larry H. Long
and
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Issued November 1980

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Preface

This study is another in a series of publications from the Census Bureau's Center for Demographic Studies. The purpose of these publications is to provide insight and perspective on important demographic trends and patterns. Most bring together data from several sources and attempt to enhance the use of Census Bureau data by pointing out the relevance of the statistics and population developments for policy analysis and policy planning. A distinguishing feature of the studies is the inclusion of broad speculative analyses and illustrative hypotheses offered by the authors as an aid in identifying the reasons underlying population trends.

Larry H. Long is a senior research associate in the Census Bureau's Center for Demographic Studies. His research has focused on regional population patterns and the changing relationships of central cities, suburbs, and nonmetropolitan areas. Recent publications on these topics include *The City-Suburb Income Gap: Is It Being Narrowed by a Back-to-the-City Movement?* (coauthored with Donald Dahmann; U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980) and "Back to the Countryside and Back to the City in the Same Decade," a chapter in *Back to the City: Issues in Neighborhood Renovation*, edited by Shirley Laska and Daphne Spain (Pergamon Press, 1980). Dr. Long received a Ph.D. degree in sociology from the University of Texas at Austin.

Diana DeAre received a Ph.D. degree in geography from the University of Texas at Austin, where she was an affiliate of the Population Research Center. She has been with the Census Bureau's Population Division since September 1975. Her research interests include population distribution, small-town growth and decline, rural development strategies, and the farm and nonmetropolitan populations.

One of the most unexpected demographic developments in the United States in the 1970's was the shift of nonmetropolitan areas to net inmigration. Partly because of this change, the nonmetropolitan sector, which includes many small towns and rural areas, experienced noticeably faster rates of total population growth in the aggregate than did metropolitan areas. To many people, these changes seemed to imply a reversal of the longstanding association of rural-to-urban migration with rapid growth of large urban areas, and there was even a suggestion in the data and discussions that new forces might be governing population redistribution in the United States and new motives might be shaping the residential location decisions of individuals.

Understanding these changes requires an analysis of reasons for moving and the motivations that underlie decisions to live in one place rather than another. Some insights into reasons for the new patterns of the 1970's have been gleaned from examination of the types of nonmetropolitan counties that had net inmigration. For example, many counties shown by the 1970 census to have concentrations of retirees have grown in population in the 1970's, suggesting retirement as a reason for moving that has helped to shift the nonmetropolitan sector to net inmigration. Also, net inmigration to many nonmetropolitan counties with recreational facilities implies that the growth of leisure time and the tendency to spend at least some of it in a rural setting have been factors in the nonmetropolitan migration turnaround. A number of other features of nonmetropolitan counties have been associated with a renewal of population growth in the 1970's (Beale, 1977; Morrill, 1978).

Economic changes have clearly played a role. A renewed search for energy has produced net inmigration in coal-mining areas of rural West Virginia and some of the Rocky Mountain States, and other economic changes—like the shift of many light-manufacturing jobs to nonmetropolitan locations to take advantage

of lower taxes, less expensive land, and cheaper labor costs—have decentralized jobs and enhanced employment opportunities in nonmetropolitan areas (see, for example, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1978). Expansion of many jobs in services, like local government, has also facilitated the change to net inmigration in the nonmetropolitan sector in the 1970's (Carpenter, 1977). Employment as well as population grew more rapidly in nonmetropolitan areas than in metropolitan areas in the 1970's, suggesting an economic basis for the population shift (Regional Economic Analysis Division, 1978; Renshaw et al., 1978; Wardwell and Gilchrist, 1980).

Among researchers, however, there is near-universal agreement that economic factors alone cannot fully account for or explain the change in the 1970's in migration between the metropolitan and nonmetropolitan sectors. A turnaround in migration patterns has occurred even in relatively isolated counties of modest income levels (Beale, 1977), and this and other evidence have suggested to many persons that noneconomic considerations involving quality-of-life or environmental amenities have become more important in individual decisions to move or not and that this development has favored a tilt of population toward less urban, more residentially attractive settings in small towns or rural locations (Beale, 1975; Goldstein, 1976; Morrison, 1976; McCarthy and Morrison, 1978). The theory is that either residential preferences have changed to favor nonmetropolitan areas or individuals have become more willing or better able to act on the basis of longstanding preferences for living in a nonmetropolitan setting, even at the sacrifice of income maximization (Carpenter, 1977; Roseman, 1977; Wardwell, 1977; Ploch, 1978; Blundell, 1980).

This monograph presents a perspective on the duration and motivational basis of this new population pattern, which emerged in the early 1970's. We first want to ask the obvious question:

- Is there any evidence, according to the most recently available data, of a slowdown or abatement in the shift of population growth and net inmigration in favor of nonmetropolitan areas?

After addressing this question, we want to go beyond the basic population figures and inquire, to the extent feasible, into the behavioral bases underlying the development of net inmigration to nonmetropolitan areas. Data on reasons for moving provide some insights along these lines, so drawing upon the Annual Housing Survey, the investigation that follows is the first on a nationwide basis of reasons for moving to nonmetropolitan areas of the United States in the 1970's. The questions we address include:

- To what extent do nonemployment motives underlie the net migration to nonmetropolitan areas in the 1970's? Would nonmetropolitan areas still have net inmigration if only persons moving for employment-related reasons were considered?

- How many of the migrants to nonmetropolitan areas stay close enough to allow them to commute into a metropolitan area for employment? Do these exurban movers differ from other metropolitan-to-nonmetropolitan movers in terms of reasons for moving? That is, are they like city-to-suburb movers but simply moving farther out, or do their reasons for moving imply different motives that carry them slightly farther from an urban core than city-to-suburb movers?
- In what types of migration streams—between metropolitan areas, between nonmetropolitan counties, from metropolitan to nonmetropolitan or from nonmetropolitan to metropolitan areas—are economic motives most prevalent? Conversely, in which of these various types of migration do retirees and persons moving for ostensibly noneconomic reasons play a significant role?
- Because effective policy planning requires an assessment of how long current patterns will continue, do available data provide any basis for speculating about whether present trends toward population deconcentration can continue in the face of energy shortages and rising prices of energy?

THE NEW PATTERN: IS IT REAL? HAS IT ENDURED?

An apparent new trend in population and migration patterns was announced on November 23, 1973, when the Census Bureau issued a press release with data from the March 1973 Current Population Survey showing more persons to have moved from than to metropolitan areas in the three years since the 1970 census (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1973). An independent data source, the Census Bureau's annual estimates of population by county, yielded two widely accepted "proofs" that the Current Population Survey data did indeed represent a new pattern of population redistribution. First, the net inmigration to nonmetropolitan areas could not be attributed simply to the spillover of population beyond the statistical boundaries of metropolitan areas, for even nonmetropolitan counties not adjacent to metropolitan areas shifted to net inmigration and grew more rapidly than metropolitan areas in the 1970's (Beale, 1975). Second, the traditional positive association between a nonmetropolitan county's income level and its likelihood (and rate) of net inmigration disappeared in the 1970's, and there was even evidence that the rate of net inmigration to nonmetropolitan counties was highest for those with the lowest income levels (Beale, 1977). Clearly, more net movement to relatively isolated rural counties and those with modest income levels occurred, raising the possibility that monetary incentives had declined in significance as a reason for moving.

Concomitant with these empirical discoveries arose the question of whether the new pattern might be only a temporary manifestation that would soon revert to the traditional trend. One economist suggested that the pattern observed in 1970-73 reflected "temporary cyclical adjustments resulting from the serious increase in unemployment rates in a number of metropolitan areas" (Kain,

1975, p. 24). But the overall pattern was not a mere aberration, for both data sets—the annual Current Population Survey and the annual county estimates of population and net migration—have confirmed the existence of the pattern for each year through 1978 or 1979. Thus, the new pattern has endured about 8 or 9 years.

Our basic concern here is whether there is any observable change in the pattern itself, for example, whether there is any evidence of a slowdown in the shift of population and net inmigration to the nonmetropolitan sector. The net inmigration to nonmetropolitan areas in the early 1970's was a pre-energy-crisis migration, and the oil embargo of the winter of 1973-74 and subsequent spot shortages and rising prices of gasoline could have caused individuals and firms to reassess their decisions regarding relocation. Other researchers have suggested (Beale, 1976; Phillips and Brunn, 1978) that at some point rising prices and declining availability of gasoline and diesel fuel put constraints on the extent to which population can deconcentrate, because nonmetropolitan manufacturing plants highly depend on truck transportation and nonmetropolitan residents depend more on private cars for transportation than city or suburban residents. Moreover, because per capita and per family incomes remain lower in nonmetropolitan areas (Long and Dahmann, 1980), the ability to absorb gasoline price increases in family budgets may be lower among nonmetropolitan than metropolitan residents.

Data recently created provide an opportunity for an initial test to examine whether events in the 4 years after the 1973-74 oil embargo measurably slowed the shift of population toward nonmetropolitan areas. The Census Bureau's annual estimates of total population and components of change (net migration and natural increase) for counties are now available from 1970 through 1978, and with such data we can ask whether the net shift of population toward nonmetropolitan areas was as great in the post-energy-crisis years of 1974-78 as in the pre-energy-crisis years 1970-74.

A difficulty in accurately making such a test is that the official definitions of metropolitan and nonmetropolitan changed between the beginning and end of the 8-year study period. For example, after the commuting data from the 1970 census became available in 1973, more than 100 counties were added to standard metropolitan statistical areas (SMSA's), reflecting the extension of suburbanization and the fact that as a result a number of nonmetropolitan counties had become functionally parts of metropolitan areas. In addition, new SMSA's are created as nonmetropolitan cities grow into metropolitan status, and based on the Census Bureau's intercensal population estimates and special censuses since 1970, a number of counties that were nonmetropolitan in 1970 have been reclassified as new metropolitan areas. Thus, in order to compare 1970-74 and 1974-78 population change in metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas, one must deal with the fact that official statistical definitions of metropolitan and nonmetropolitan differed in 1970, 1974, and 1978.

Accordingly, we assembled table 1 to show 1970-74 and 1974-78 average

Table 1. Change in Metropolitan and Nonmetropolitan Population Due to Net Migration and Natural Increase, 1970-74 and 1974-78, According to Changing Definitions of SMSA

SMSA definition	Population (thous.)			Average annual rate of change in total population		Average annual rate of change from net migration		Average annual rate of change from natural increase	
	April 1, 1970	July 1, 1974	July 1, 1978	1970-74	1974-78	1970-74	1974-78	1970-74	1974-78
Total U.S. population	203,302	211,344	218,063	0.91	0.78	0.23	0.17	0.69	0.62
1970 definition:									
Inside SMSA's	140,324	144,540	147,816	.70	.56	−.02	−.07	.71	.63
Outside SMSA's	62,978	66,804	70,247	1.39	1.26	.78	.67	.63	.50
1974 definition:									
Inside SMSA's	148,880	153,992	157,942	.80	.63	.08	.01	.72	.63
Outside SMSA's	54,422	57,352	60,121	1.23	1.18	.64	.59	.61	.60
1980 definition:									
Inside SMSA's	150,883	156,182	160,267	.81	.65	.10	.02	.72	.63
Outside SMSA's	52,419	55,162	57,796	1.20	1.17	.62	.59	.60	.59

Note: Metropolitan refers to standard metropolitan statistical areas (SMSA's), except for New England where New England County Metropolitan Areas (NECMA's) are used. Nonmetropolitan refers to outside SMSA's (NECMA's in New England).

Source: Special tabulations of county population estimates prepared by the Census Bureau for the Federal-State Cooperative Program for Local Population Estimates.

annual rates of change in total population, net migration, and natural increase for metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas as defined in 1970, 1974, and as of January 1980. We took 1980 as the last date rather than 1978 in order to obtain the most extensive definition of what is metropolitan. The official determination of what is to be considered metropolitan rests with the Office of Federal Statistical Policy and Standards (OFSPS), formerly a part of the Office of Management and Budget but now a part of the Commerce Department (still independent of the Census Bureau, however). A committee sponsored by OFSPS meets periodically to decide whether additional counties meet the established criteria for metropolitan (SMSA) status. In somewhat oversimplified terms, an SMSA consists of a county with a city (or twin cities) of at least 50,000 population; an adjacent county may be included if there is significant commuting into the central county. What is not part of an SMSA is considered nonmetropolitan.

Regardless of whether one uses the 1970, 1974, or 1980 SMSA definition, the average annual rate of population growth declined in both metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas between the 1970-74 and 1974-78 intervals. This decline reflects a decrease in the national rate of population growth, from 0.91 percent per year in 1970-74 to 0.78 percent per year in 1974-78. The total population increased in both the metropolitan and nonmetropolitan sectors. This point is important because although a number of individual metropolitan areas declined in total population in the 1970's (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980), the total metropolitan population of the nation increased. The nonmetropolitan sector, however, grew more rapidly during both intervals, irrespective of which definition of metropolitan is used.

Note that except for the most restrictive (1970) metropolitan definition, both the metropolitan and nonmetropolitan sectors are shown to have net inmigration (i.e., positive rates of population change due to migration). Both sectors can have net inmigration because the data in table 1 include migration from abroad. It is not possible to exclude such migration from the table, but survey data indicate that when migration from abroad is excluded, the metropolitan sector shows substantial net outmigration to the nonmetropolitan sector (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1975; Bowles, 1978).

Clearly, the nonmetropolitan population has continued to grow more rapidly than the metropolitan population, even in the post-energy-crisis era and regardless of the metropolitan definition. But has the shift of population to the nonmetropolitan sector slowed down? Such a slowdown could be indicated by a decline in the degree to which nonmetropolitan population growth exceeded that of metropolitan areas; tables 2, 3, and 4 provide this and other measures extracted from the basic data in table 1.

Table 2 shows the ratio of nonmetropolitan rates of population change to metropolitan rates in order to facilitate comparison of the degree to which the nonmetropolitan sector grew more rapidly than the metropolitan in the two time periods. The table reveals that the ratio rose between the 1970-74 and

Table 2. Degree of Difference Between Metropolitan and Nonmetropolitan Average Annual Rates of Total Population Growth and Natural Increase, 1970-74 and 1974-78, According to Changing Definitions of SMSA

SMSA definition	Ratio of nonmetropolitan to metropolitan population growth		Ratio of nonmetropolitan to metropolitan natural increase	
	1970-74	1974-78	1970-74	1974-78
1970 definition	1.99	2.25	0.89	0.95
1974 definition	1.54	1.87	.85	.95
1980 definition	1.48	1.80	.83	.94

Table 3. U.S. Population in Metropolitan Areas in 1970, 1974, and 1978, According to Changing Definitions of SMSA

(Percent)

SMSA definition	1970	1974	1978
1970 definition	69.0	68.4	67.8
1974 definition	73.2	72.9	72.4
1980 definition	74.2	73.9	73.5

Table 4. National Population Growth Occurring in Metropolitan Areas, 1970-74 and 1974-78, According to Changing Definitions of SMSA

(Percent)

SMSA definition	1970-74	1974-78
1970 definition	52.4	48.8
1974 definition	63.6	58.8
1980 definition	65.9	60.8

1974-78 intervals, indicating a more rapid population shift to the nonmetropolitan sector in the more recent interval. Observe, for example, that for the 1970 definitions the nonmetropolitan sector's average annual rate of population growth was 1.99 times as great as that of the metropolitan sector in the 1970-74 period; by 1974-78 the nonmetropolitan growth rate was 2.25 times as great. Even with the updated, more expansive definitions of metropolitan in use in 1974 and 1980, the same conclusion applies: the growth-rate differential widened in favor of nonmetropolitan areas in the post-energy-crisis period.

Hence, we tentatively conclude that energy developments since the 1973-74 oil embargo did not slow down, at least by 1978, the shift in population growth toward the nonmetropolitan sector. Although rates of natural increase and net migration declined between the two time periods in both sectors, the shift accelerated in 1974-78 relative to 1970-74 because the declines were greater in metropolitan areas. The data suggest that persons living in nonmetropolitan areas or wishing to live there have been able to make adjustments and accommodations to rising energy prices without changing their residential location decisions enough to measurably slow the shift of population growth away from metropolitan areas.

Both natural increase and net migration contributed to widening the differential in rates of population growth between metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas. Sustained net inmigration to an area often involves young persons in the reproductive years and thereby tends to have a positive effect on natural increase through this alteration in age composition. This type of effect may help to explain why, at a time when birth rates for the Nation as a whole are falling, rates of natural increase fell less in nonmetropolitan than in metropolitan areas. The point is that net inmigration during one time period tends to instill a momentum to population growth during later time periods, and the momentum of population growth that began with the net inmigration to nonmetropolitan areas in 1970-74 continued with even stronger force in 1974-78.

IS THE NATION UNDERGOING DEMETROPOLITANIZATION?

From at least 1900 to 1970 the United States underwent metropolitanization, whereby a growing proportion of the population at each census was found to be living in metropolitan areas (Taeuber, 1972). Because metropolitan areas had slower rates of population growth than the nonmetropolitan sector in the 1970's, can we say that the opposite process—demetropolitanization—was at work? One of the ironies of nonmetropolitan population growth is that if it is rapid enough and continues long enough, it transforms the character of nonmetropolitan localities to metropolitan, either as a result of the growth of cities or towns to metropolitan status in their own right or as a result of fusing nonmetropolitan counties with existing metropolitan areas. In the 1970's the proportion of the population living in metropolitan areas increased *but only as a result of the reclassification of nonmetropolitan counties to metropolitan status.* Because of such reclassifications, the percent of U.S. population living in metropolitan areas rose from 69.0 percent in 1970 to 73.5 percent in 1978 (table 3).

The percent of the U.S. population living in territory classified as metropolitan in 1970 fell from 69.0 percent to 67.8 percent in 1978. Even if we take the more expansive definition of metropolitan in use in 1980 and extend it back to 1970, the percent of population living in metropolitan territory fell from 74.2 percent in 1970 to 73.5 percent in 1978. These may seem like very small

changes, but they deviate from historical patterns. In the past the percent of population living in metropolitan areas increased from three sources: (1) population growth in existing metropolitan territory at a rate above the national average, (2) population growth on the fringes of metropolitan areas and the subsequent inclusion of nonmetropolitan counties in existing metropolitan areas, and (3) the birth of new metropolitan areas as nonmetropolitan cities and towns grow large enough to be redefined as metropolitan. At the present time the Nation's metropolitan population increases entirely from the second and third sources.

Because a majority of Americans live in metropolitan areas (using the 1970 or 1980 definitions of metropolitan), it should come as no surprise to find that more than one-half of the Nation's population growth between 1970 and 1978 occurred within the borders of metropolitan areas (Table 4). Between 1970 and 1974 the Nation's population grew from 203.3 million to 211.3 million—8 million persons. Under any of the three definitions of metropolitan, more than one-half of this increase went to SMSA's. In 1974-78 total population growth for the country as a whole was down to 6.6 million, and except for the most restrictive (1970) definition of SMSA's, more than one-half of this growth occurred in SMSA's. Importantly, however, metropolitan areas have been absorbing a *declining* proportion of the Nation's population growth—by all three definitions of metropolitan areas.

Of course, analyzing population distribution on a metropolitan-nonmetropolitan basis is only one perspective on population distribution, and there are many other ways of measuring population concentration or deconcentration (e.g., see Long, forthcoming). If available on an intercensal basis, more complex measures of spatial patterns might provide fuller insights into the effects (if any) of energy developments on population deconcentration trends of the 1970's. Moreover, there are likely to be considerable lags between systemic shocks (like rapidly rising prices of gasoline) and changes in population distribution, so that the effects of energy developments in 1974-78 might not be evident in the data but might manifest themselves over a much longer period of time. There has not been a great deal of research to draw upon in trying to assess how quickly households change their residence or in other ways adjust their behavior in response to rapidly changing energy circumstances.

We want to emphasize that the data presented up to now are from the Census Bureau's population estimates for individual counties summed to metropolitan and nonmetropolitan aggregates. Because the data are estimates, they are subject to error. The Census Bureau initially began to extend its intercensal population estimates down to the county level in the late 1960's, but not until the 1970's were data available annually. The 1980 census will allow assessment of the accuracy of techniques used to prepare population estimates for individual counties in the 1970's, and although discrepancies between the estimates and the census population counts for counties are sure to occur, some will offset each other when counties are grouped into metropolitan and nonmetropolitan categories.

Our basic conclusion is simply that available data indicate that the metropolitan-to-nonmetropolitan shift of population first observed in the early 1970's accelerated in 1974-78. The present is a good time to ask this question because although the 1980 census will provide a more detailed snapshot view in comparison with 1970, it can offer relatively little in assessing whether the trend observed in the early 1970's had changed by 1980.

GROSS FLOWS AND REASONS FOR MOVING

Strong forces appear to have continued in 1974-78 to push people away from metropolitan areas generally and to pull them toward the less densely settled nonmetropolitan counties. One way of assessing the reasons behind these push and pull forces examines the types of counties experiencing changes in migration patterns. In the 1970's this approach tended to concentrate on pull factors because of the focus on types of nonmetropolitan counties that changed from net outmigration in the 1960's to net inmigration in the 1970's. Economic reasons for moving are suggested by nonmetropolitan turnaround counties that attract manufacturing or experience renewed oil and gas exploration or coal mining. A noneconomic basis for the nonmetropolitan turnaround is suggested by counties with growing concentrations of retirees or without an obvious economic explanation for growth.

Perhaps the most direct method of assessing why people move is simply to ask them. A strong representation of noneconomic reasons for moving to nonmetropolitan areas is suggested by a number of special surveys taken in recent years in selected groups of counties in the Midwest (Williams and Sofranko, 1979), the Upper Great Lakes (Voss and Fuguitt, 1979), and Pennsylvania (DeJong and Keppel, 1979). Although these regional surveys throw considerable light on the subject, the broader question remains: For the United States as a whole, would nonmetropolitan areas still have net inmigration if only persons moving for economic reasons were considered? A negative answer to this question would imply that essentially noneconomic considerations have played a large, possibly dominant role in the nonmetropolitan turnaround (at least at the national level) and whatever trends might put more people in a position to move (or not to move) out of other than strictly job-related considerations might also tend to continue the shift of the U.S. population toward nonmetropolitan counties.

In the 1970's the largest nationwide surveys to ask persons moving to nonmetropolitan (and other) localities to give their reasons for moving were the Annual Housing Surveys conducted by the Census Bureau for the Department of Housing and Urban Development. We used the 1975 survey because it provided a mid-decade perspective and included a one-time supplement on place of work. The same questions on mobility status and main reason for moving were included in the surveys of 1975 through 1978. This part of the 1975 questionnaire is reprinted as figure 1.

Figure 1. Questions on mobility status and reason for moving in the 1975 annual housing survey

Section IIIC – OCCUPIED UNITS (*Include URE*) – Continued

CHECK ITEM Q

- ☐ URE household (*See item 7, page 1*) – Skip to *105, page 31*
  (*See Check Item A(3), page 14*)
- ☐ Head moved here during this last 12 months – Ask *83*
- ☐ Head has lived here 12 months or longer – Skip to *102a, page 30*

83. **What was the address of . . .'s (head) previous residence?**

Address (Number and street)

City or town

County | State | ZIP code

OR

(177) 1 ☐ Outside the United States – Skip to *102a, page 30*

84. **What is the main reason . . . (head) moved from his previous residence?**
(Write all reasons mentioned below, and then mark the main reason.)

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

(178)

EMPLOYMENT
1 ☐ Job transfer
2 ☐ Entered or left U.S. Armed Forces
3 ☐ Retirement
4 ☐ New job or looking for work
5 ☐ Commuting reasons
6 ☐ To attend school
7 ☐ Other

FAMILY
8 ☐ Needed larger house or apartment
9 ☐ Widowed
10 ☐ Separated
11 ☐ Divorced
12 ☐ Moved to be closer to relatives
13 ☐ Newly married
14 ☐ Family increased
15 ☐ Family decreased
16 ☐ Wanted to establish own household
17 ☐ Other

(179)

OTHER
18 ☐ Neighborhood overcrowded
19 ☐ Change in racial or ethnic composition of neighborhood
20 ☐ Wanted better neighborhood
21 ☐ Wanted to own residence
22 ☐ Lower rent or less expensive house
23 ☐ Wanted better house
24 ☐ Displaced by urban renewal, highway construction, or other public activity
25 ☐ Displaced by private action
26 ☐ Schools
27 ☐ Wanted to rent residence
28 ☐ Wanted residence with more conveniences
29 ☐ Natural disaster
30 ☐ Wanted change of climate
31 ☐ Other

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Heads of households who moved in the 12 months preceding the survey, which was conducted in October, November, and December 1975, gave the locations of their previous residences and then were asked, "What is the main reason. . . (head) moved from his previous residence?" The interviewer was instructed to write on the lines provided on the questionnaire the reason or reasons for moving. For respondents giving more than one reason, the interviewer asked

which was the "main" reason and then marked one of the 30 reasons listed on the questionnaire or else marked the "other" category (reason 31). In processing the data, multiple responses were not retained; so we have no information on the frequency with which each of the individual reasons was mentioned or the way in which respondents chose the main reason among several offered.

In the survey, household heads were identified in the manner traditionally employed by the Census Bureau (see, e.g., U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1977a). In husband-wife couples, the husband was considered the head for purposes of data collection and tabulation, but automatic designation of the husband as the household head is being discontinued.

About 62,000 households were interviewed in the 1975 national sample. Migration responses were coded in terms of the boundaries of standard metropolitan statistical areas defined at the time of the 1970 census. (Additional information about the sample, including estimates of sampling errors, may be found in U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1977a.)

The basic data on migration flows (in terms of households) between the metropolitan and nonmetropolitan sectors and the main reasons for moving in the 12 months preceding the 1975 Annual Housing Survey appear in table 5. We have rearranged the order of the categories on the questionnaire (figure 1), and because of small cell frequencies we have collapsed some of the categories, usually in obvious ways although neighborhood dissatisfaction includes reasons 18, 19, 20, and 26 and the miscellaneous category under housing and neighborhood encompasses reasons 24, 25, 27, and 29.

The number of households (770,000) moving to nonmetropolitan areas, the number (651,000) moving from nonmetropolitan areas, and the net inmigration of 119,000 households to nonmetropolitan areas during the year preceding the 1975 Annual Housing Survey agree fairly closely with independent data from the Current Population Survey (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1977b). The most important conclusion from table 5 is the demonstration that the net inmigration to nonmetropolitan areas results from households moving for reasons not directly related to employment. Note that the number of households moving to metropolitan areas for employment reasons (316,000) approximately equals the number of households moving from metropolitan areas for employment reasons (313,000). These figures mean that metropolitan areas about broke even among households whose main reason for moving was employment related.

But metropolitan areas lose migrants whose main reason for moving is not directly employment related. These nonemployment reasons include a variety of family considerations and housing and neighborhood aspirations, but being more specific is difficult because many individual reasons have cell frequencies far too small to draw firm conclusions about net movements between sectors.

Metropolitan areas appear to attract persons experiencing marital breakups (widowhood, divorce, or separation), persons entering or leaving the Armed

Table 5. Reasons Reported by Household Heads for Moving Between Metropolitan and Nonmetropolitan Destinations in the 12 Months Preceding the 1975 Annual Housing Survey

Main reason for moving	Metropolitan to nonmetropolitan (thous.)	Nonmetropolitan to metropolitan (thous.)	Nonmetropolitan net gain or loss (thous.)	Metropolitan to nonmetropolitan (percent)	Nonmetropolitan to metropolitan (percent)
Total households	770	651	119	100.0	100.0
Employment	313	316	−3	40.7	48.5
Job transfer	118	108	10	15.3	16.6
New job or looking for work	177	172	5	23.0	26.4
Commuting	9	21	−12	1.2	3.2
Other	9	15	−6	1.2	2.3
Family	136	120	16	17.7	18.4
To be closer to relatives	52	40	12	6.8	6.1
Marriage and household formation	43	34	9	5.6	5.2
Marital dissolution	15	33	−18	1.9	5.1
Other	26	13	13	3.4	2.0
Housing and neighborhood	118	46	72	15.3	7.1
Larger house or apartment	21	7	14	2.7	1.1
To own residence	18	14	4	2.3	2.2
Lower rent/less expensive house	21	7	14	2.7	1.1
Better house/more conveniences	9	8	1	1.2	1.2
Neighborhood dissatisfaction	33	6	27	4.3	.9
Miscellaneous	16	4	12	2.1	.6
Enter or leave Armed Forces	19	31	−12	2.5	4.8
Attend school	42	59	−17	5.5	9.1
Retirement	43	12	31	5.6	1.8
Change of climate	16	12	4	2.1	1.8
Not classified	58	35	23	7.5	5.4
Not reported	27	20	7	3.5	3.1

Note: Percentages may not add to 100.0 because of rounding. Metropolitan areas are defined as of 1970.

Forces, and students. The number of sample cases in these categories is too small to allow the conclusion that metropolitan areas actually have net inmigration of household heads with these characteristics, but other studies have suggested reasons why metropolitan areas (especially central cities) appeal to persons in at least some of these categories (Long and Glick, 1976; Munick and Sullivan, 1977).

Note that the employment-related reasons appear to be more often reported by migrants to than from metropolitan areas. About 48.5 percent of households moving to metropolitan areas gave one of the employment reasons, compared with 40.7 percent of household heads leaving metropolitan areas. Unless one adopts a more expansive concept of employment-related reasons than shown in table 5, the conclusion is that strictly employment-related reasons account for less than a majority of households moving between the metropolitan and nonmetropolitan sectors.

In general, the data tend to support the thesis that the shift of migration in the 1970's to favor nonmetropolitan areas is substantially the product of persons moving for reasons not directly related to jobs. The net inmigration to nonmetropolitan areas seems to result from persons moving for such nonemployment reasons as a desire to be closer to relatives (conceivably some of these migrants are earlier rural-to-urban migrants "going home") and newly established households and others with a desire to own their own homes or to obtain larger houses. Lower housing prices in nonmetropolitan locations also seem to have drawn migrants from metropolitan areas, and dissatisfaction with neighborhood conditions in metropolitan areas appears to propel movement to nonmetropolitan areas.

The nonmetropolitan sector probably has net inmigration of retirees, but the number of sample cases in the 1975 Annual Housing Survey is too small to draw firm conclusions. According to table 5, an estimated 43,000 household heads moved to the nonmetropolitan sector in the 12 months preceding the survey, and 12,000 moved in the opposite direction. The apparent difference between the two numbers is not large enough to draw statistically reliable conclusions about the net exchange of retirees. These figures are perhaps surprising in that the representation of retirees in the metropolitan-to-nonmetropolitan stream is not higher, for the effect of retirees has played a prominent role in analyses of the nonmetropolitan migration turnaround (e.g., Beale, 1975; Morrison, 1976). An estimated 5.6 percent of household heads migrating to nonmetropolitan areas in the 12 months preceding the 1975 Annual Housing Survey named retirement as the main reason for moving. Even if these retirees were excluded from the stream of outmigrants, metropolitan areas still would not have net inmigration. Hence, these data on self-reported reasons for moving suggest that retirees account for a relatively modest proportion of the metropolitan-to-nonmetropolitan migration stream and do not, by themselves, account for the turnaround in nonmetropolitan migration.

Two qualifications need to be made to this conclusion. First, the effect of

retirement on nonmetropolitan population change may be far greater than the number of relocating retirees would imply, for clearly there can be multiplier effects whereby retirement migration generates employment for persons still in the labor force. Second, the number of household heads who in the survey reported retirement as the main reason for moving may greatly understate the true number of retirees among migrants. An earlier study (Long and Hansen, 1979) of Annual Housing Survey data on interstate migrants in the mid-1970's indicated that the number reporting retirement as the main reason for moving was only about one-sixth as large as the number receiving pension income. Many of the migrants with what appeared to be retirement income gave an employment-related reason for moving or said the move occurred to be closer to relatives, to achieve a change in climate, or for some other consideration rather than retirement as the main reason. The broad conclusion is that many retirees reenter the labor force or for some other reason are difficult to identify separately in surveys as retirees. For these reasons, the effects of retirement on population distribution are difficult to assess accurately.

A final observation about table 5 is that a fairly substantial number of spatially mobile households did not report a reason for moving or gave a reason that could not be assigned to one of the 30 prelisted categories. Together, these two groups constituted 85,000 household heads moving to nonmetropolitan areas (about 11 percent of the total) and 55,000 household heads moving in the opposite direction (8.5 percent of total households moving to metropolitan areas). These figures seem to imply a net inmigration to nonmetropolitan areas of persons in these residual categories. To investigate this possibility, we examined the "not classified" responses written on the questionnaires of the 1979 Annual Housing Survey. We found that a sizeable number expressed what might be considered prorural attitudes: "wanted out of a big city," "wanted a farm," and "wanted to live in the country" were some of the handwritten entries. Among the not classified group we did not find a single case of a person expressing the opposite sentiments that would indicate a preference for living in a big city or a metropolitan environment. This exercise suggested to us the real possibility that nonmetropolitan areas have a small net gain of migrants expressing motivations not represented in the 30 coding categories; such a conclusion serves to underscore the heterogeneity of reasons underlying migration to nonmetropolitan areas.

MIGRATION OF EMPLOYED HOUSEHOLD HEADS

In assessing the role of employment considerations in migration between metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas, it is necessary to control for migrants' employment status. Perhaps the net outmigration from metropolitan areas, as shown in table 5, can be attributed entirely to persons not in the labor force. If so, then one would understandably expect to find a higher representation of noneconomic reasons among households moving from than to metropolitan areas. In order to take these considerations into account, table 6 shows

Table 6. Reasons Reported by Working and Nonworking Household Heads for Moving Between Metropolitan and Nonmetropolitan Destinations in the 12 Months Preceding the 1975 Annual Housing Survey

Main reason for moving	Number (thous.)				Percent distribution			
	Household heads with a job last week		All other household heads		Household heads with a job last week		All other household heads	
	Metropolitan to nonmetropolitan	Nonmetropolitan to metropolitan	Metropolitan to nonmetropolitan	Nonmetropolitan to metropolitan	Metropolitan to nonmetropolitan	Nonmetropolitan to metropolitan	Metropolitan to nonmetropolitan	Nonmetropolitan to metropolitan
Total households	533	481	237	170	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Employment	288	286	25	30	54.0	59.5	10.5	17.6
Job transfer	109	106	9	2	20.5	22.0	3.8	1.2
New job or looking for work	164	146	13	26	30.8	30.4	5.5	15.3
Commuting	9	20	–	1	1.7	4.2	–	.6
Other	6	14	3	1	1.1	2.9	1.3	.6

Family	73	62	63	58	13.7	12.9	26.6	34.1
To be closer to relatives	19	15	33	25	3.6	3.1	13.9	14.7
Marriage and household formation	34	28	9	6	6.4	5.8	3.8	3.5
Marital dissolution	6	14	9	19	1.1	2.9	3.8	11.2
Other	14	5	12	8	2.6	1.0	5.1	4.7
Housing and neighborhood	87	36	31	10	16.3	7.5	11.1	5.9
Larger house or apartment	20	7	1	–	3.8	1.5	.4	–
To own residence	18	12	–	2	3.4	2.5	–	1.2
Lower rent/less expensive house	12	3	9	4	2.3	.6	3.8	2.4
Better house/more conveniences	6	6	3	2	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.2
Neighborhood dissatisfaction	18	5	15	1	3.4	1.0	6.3	.6
Miscellaneous	13	3	3	1	2.4	.6	1.3	.6
Enter or leave Armed Forces	12	24	7	7	2.3	5.0	3.0	4.1
Attend school	18	24	24	35	3.4	5.0	10.1	20.6
Retirement	5	1	38	11	.9	.2	16.0	6.5
Change of climate	4	6	12	6	.8	1.2	5.1	3.5
Not classified	28	24	30	11	5.3	5.0	12.7	6.5
Not reported	18	16	9	4	3.4	3.3	3.8	2.4

Note: Percentages may not add to 100.0 because of rounding. Metropolitan areas are defined as of 1970.
–Indicates no sample cases fell in this category.

the same type of data as table 5 but controls for whether the household head had a job in the week preceding the survey.

Table 6 demonstrates that even among household heads who had a job in the week preceding the survey, metropolitan areas (as defined in 1970) appeared to have had net outmigration. An estimated 533,000 household heads so employed moved out of metropolitan areas in the 12 months preceding the 1975 survey, compared with 481,000 who moved in. Metropolitan areas also appear to have had net outmigration of household heads who did not have a job in the week preceding the survey; of these nonworking household heads (some of whom were unemployed and some simply not in the labor force), an estimated 237,000 left metropolitan areas and only 170,000 moved to them.

Among employed household heads moving for employment-related reasons (as identified in table 6), there is an approximate balance in the flow between metropolitan and nonmetropolitan areas. According to the table, among employed household heads (i.e., with a job in the week preceding the survey), the number moving to metropolitan areas—an estimated 286,000—approximately equalled the number leaving metropolitan areas—an estimated 288,000—in the 12 months preceding the 1975 Annual Housing Survey. These data mean that the overall net migration to nonmetropolitan territory seems to be essentially the product of: (1) persons not working (columns 3 and 4 of table 6) and (2) employed persons moving for reasons not directly employment related. The nonemployment reasons that induce employed household heads to move to nonmetropolitan areas encompass a wide variety of factors associated with housing aspirations and dissatisfaction with the metropolitan neighborhood from which the household moved. Limitations of sample size generally prevent more precise characterization of these broad sets of reasons.

Among employed household heads, however, employment-related reasons account for at least one-half of migration between metropolitan and nonmetropolitan destinations. As shown in table 6, 54.0 percent of employed household heads moving to nonmetropolitan areas cited one of the employment-related reasons, as did 59.5 percent of employed household heads moving in the opposite direction. Even when we limit the comparison to employed household heads, the data suggest that noneconomic considerations are somewhat more important in moves from than moves to metropolitan areas.

DISTANCE FROM A METROPOLITAN AREA

Some migrants leaving metropolitan areas do not go far. In fact, some stay close enough to commute into metropolitan areas for employment, and they and others who do not move far from metropolitan areas live in territory that might be called exurban or some other term that connotes a residence slightly beyond established suburban developments and not clearly metropolitan or nonmetropolitan in character but becoming part of the suburban fringe of expanding metropolitan areas. Most metropolitan areas are spatially expanding;

even some metropolitan areas that decreased in population in the 1970's had population growth in their outer counties and in this way expanded outward into nonmetropolitan territory (Long and Dahmann, 1980).

The effect of the exurbanites on metropolitan-nonmetropolitan contrasts is sometimes unclear, for surveys tend to be tabulated into categories that may suggest a sharper distinction than actually exists. Persons moving to territory statistically defined as nonmetropolitan but lying very close to a metropolitan area may be moving for the same reasons as city-to-suburb movers and in other ways might be thought of as suburbanites who are merely moving slightly farther than others from an urban core. If so, then it is hardly surprising to find what seems to be a large proportion of reasons that appear to be noneconomic (at least not directly job related) among metropolitan-to-nonmetropolitan migrants, for many past studies have sought to explain suburbanization in terms of a desire for homeownership, more space, better schools for children, or other essentially noneconomic motivations (Goodman, 1979; Spain, 1980).

In an attempt to test the hypothesis that migrants to nonmetropolitan territory adjacent to metropolitan areas move for the same reasons as city-to-suburb movers, we constructed table 7, which shows the distribution of reasons for moving among city-to-suburb movers and three groups of households leaving metropolitan areas as defined in 1970. For the metropolitan-to-nonmetropolitan movers we show: (1) those who went to counties that became parts of metropolitan areas between 1970 and 1975; (2) those who probably moved slightly farther out, to counties not incorporated into but adjacent to metropolitan areas as defined in 1975; and (3) those who moved still farther out, to nonmetropolitan counties not adjacent to metropolitan areas.

Most households moving from metropolitan areas go to counties either adjacent to metropolitan areas or no more than one county away from metropolitan areas. From table 7 one can conclude that among households leaving SMSA's (as defined in 1970) in the 12 months preceding the 1975 survey, about 20.3 percent went to counties incorporated into metropolitan areas between 1970 and 1975; another 48.3 percent went to counties still nonmetropolitan in 1975 but adjacent to metropolitan areas whose boundaries had been updated to 1975. Altogether, 68.6 percent of the nonmetropolitan-bound households went to counties very recently redefined as belonging to SMSA's or else adjacent to redefined SMSA's. These data should not be interpreted, however, as proving that the nonmetropolitan migration turnaround is explainable as metropolitan spillover, for past analyses have shown that although about 60 percent of the net inmigration to nonmetropolitan territory went to the adjacent counties, the nonadjacent counties experienced a turnaround from net outmigration in the 1960's to net inmigration in the 1970's. This change in pattern in the nonadjacent nonmetropolitan counties is generally accepted as a demonstration that new forces seem to be governing population redistribution to the nonmetropolitan sector in the 1970's (Beale, 1975).

The purpose of table 7 is to see if different motives govern movement from

Table 7. Reasons Reported by Household Heads for Moving From Cities to Suburbs and for Moving Out of Metropolitan Areas in the 12 Months Preceding the 1975 Annual Housing Survey, According to an Indicator of Distance From Metropolitan Areas

(Percent)

Main reason for moving	Movers[1] from central cities to balance of SMSA as defined in 1970	Movers from SMSA's as defined in 1970		
		To counties added to SMSA's between 1970 and 1975	To counties adjacent to SMSA's as defined in 1975	To counties not adjacent to SMSA's as defined in 1975
Household heads (thous.)	1,003	156	372	240
Employment	8.3	34.6	35.2	53.1
Job transfer	.6	19.2	11.0	19.1
New job or looking for work	2.0	12.2	22.8	30.7
Commuting	4.5	3.2	1.1	–
Other	1.2	–	.3	3.3
Family	24.6	15.4	21.0	13.7
To be closer to relatives	.9	5.1	7.3	7.1
Marriage and household formation	16.0	7.7	7.3	1.7
Marital dissolution	4.3	1.9	1.6	2.1
Other	3.5	.6	4.8	2.9
Housing and neighborhood	52.5	22.4	17.2	7.8
Larger house or apartment	12.1	2.6	4.0	.4
To own residence	14.0	6.4	1.9	.4
Lower rent/less expensive house	6.1	2.6	3.0	2.5
Better house/more conveniences	8.2	1.9	1.1	.8
Neighborhood dissatisfaction	8.7	5.1	4.6	3.3
Miscellaneous	3.6	3.8	2.7	.4
Enter or leave Armed Forces	.3	1.3	1.1	5.4
Attend school	.5	4.5	7.3	2.9
Retirement	.6	5.8	5.6	5.0
Change of climate	.8	1.3	2.2	2.5
Not classified	10.0	12.2	5.6	7.1
Not reported	2.5	3.2	4.8	2.1

–Indicates no sample cases fell in this category.
[1] Excludes intermetropolitan migrants.

cities to suburbs and from metropolitan areas to adjacent and nonadjacent nonmetropolitan counties. The table indicates that these different groups of movers cite substantially different reasons for moving. For one, movement to exurbia is more strongly governed by employment-related considerations than movement to suburbia. Only 8.3 percent of movers from cities to suburbs cited one of the employment-related reasons compared with around 35 percent of the movers to the two exurban categories (columns 2 and 3 of table 7). Conversely, the housing and neighborhood reasons that account for 52.5 percent of the city-to-suburb moves account for only 22.4 percent and 17.2 percent of moves to the two exurban groups of counties. Just why these differences should occur between the suburban and exurban movers is not clear. Perhaps the exurban movers simply follow jobs that decentralize into the countryside. Even the exurban movers who commute into metropolitan areas for work (data not shown) appeared more likely to report one of the employment-related reasons for moving than the city-to-suburb movers. In general these types of data indicate that households moving to the fringes of metropolitan areas do so for a somewhat greater variety of reasons than reported by households moving to more traditional suburban areas.

It may come as a surprise to find that employment-related reasons account for a majority of households moving to the most remote group of counties, those not adjacent to SMSA's as defined in 1975. These counties have had high rates of outmigration in the past (Beale, 1975), and there is a temptation to think of them as offering few employment opportunities. Explanations of their growth in the 1970's (e.g., Morrison, 1976) have stressed their attractions to retirees and their recreational opportunities, which probably provide jobs for local residents rather than pull in jobseekers from urban areas. But the remote nonmetropolitan counties are a heterogeneous group that includes many areas with renewed coal mining and other newly developed employment opportunities. At any rate, a majority (53.1 percent) of households moving from metropolitan areas to the nonadjacent nonmetropolitan counties reported employment-related reasons. This seems like a higher representation of employment-related reasons for moving than for any of the other groups of migrants examined so far, although limitations of sample size prohibit firm conclusions.

Retirees might be expected to be relatively more numerous among migrants to the nonadjacent than to the adjacent counties, based upon analyses that have emphasized the footlooseness of the growing number of retirees and their apparent preference for rural settings (Beale, 1975; Morrison, 1976). Actually, the proportion of retirees among migrants to the nonadjacent nonmetropolitan counties (5.0 percent) does not exceed the proportion among migrants to nonmetropolitan counties adjacent to SMSA's (5.6 percent). The conclusion is simply that like most other persons moving out of metropolitan areas, the majority of retirees go to counties no more than one county away from metropolitan areas.

Migrants from metropolitan areas who report employment-related reasons for moving appear to be somewhat more likely than others to go to one of the relatively remote nonadjacent counties. Data compiled for table 7 indicate that about 41 percent of households reporting employment-related reasons for moving from SMSA's went to nonadjacent counties, compared with 24 percent for those reporting family reasons and 16 percent for those reporting housing and neighborhood reasons. The sample sizes are too small to permit firm conclusions, but these comparisons suggest the expected: those who leave metropolitan areas for the types of reasons most commonly cited by city-to-suburb movers are likely to stay closer to metropolitan areas than those who look for work or take jobs in nonmetropolitan settings.

TYPES OF MIGRATION

Up to now, we have identified only one group of movers—those leaving metropolitan areas for nonmetropolitan counties not adjacent to metropolitan areas—for whom the employment-related reasons accounted for a majority of moves. Less than 50 percent of the movers to or from metropolitan areas (as defined in 1970) reported one of the employment-related reasons identified in the 1975 Annual Housing Survey. In an attempt to gain a fuller perspective on the role of economic reasons in accounting for different types of migration, table 8 was produced. It shows the distribution of main reasons for moving for each of four major types of migration: between metropolitan areas, between nonmetropolitan counties, and the two already discussed (from nonmetropolitan to metropolitan areas and from metropolitan areas to nonmetropolitan territory). Reasons for moving as reported by several groups of intra-area movers are also shown.

For none of the four types of migration did the employment-related reasons account for a majority of moves. The percent of household heads citing one of the employment-related reasons was 46.1 among intermetropolitan migrants, 41.9 among those migrating between nonmetropolitan counties, 48.5 among those going from nonmetropolitan to metropolitan areas, and 40.7 among those leaving metropolitan areas for nonmetropolitan locations. Differences among these four types of movers in the percent citing the employment-related reasons for moving are not always statistically significant, and the major conclusion is that these reasons explain less than one-half of migration within the United States, according to the definitions of migration shown in the first four columns of table 8.

No easily identifiable set of reasons explains a majority of these moves. The several family-related reasons explain between 15.6 percent and 19.4 percent of the four types of migration, and various housing and neighborhood considerations explain another 7.1 to 15.8 percent of moves between metropolitan areas, between nonmetropolitan counties, or between metropolitan and nonmetropolitan destinations. All things considered, the data seem to suggest a

heterogeneous set of factors and a diversity of motivations underlying each of the four types of movement.

Exact comparisons of these results with past nationwide surveys of reasons for moving are impossible because of differences in the universe to whom questions were asked and differences in the way questions were asked and answers were coded. The earlier national surveys generally concluded that employment considerations constituted the major motivation underlying most moves between counties or economic areas (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1947, 1966; Lansing and Mueller, 1967). Such a conclusion does not seem fully consistent with the present results, but because of lack of comparability among the surveys, it is impossible to demonstrate conclusively that reasons for moving have changed. They probably are changing, however, because of changes in the composition of the work force (especially the increase in the number and proportion of women workers), changes in household composition (e.g., fewer persons per household and more households maintained by single parents), occupations and age of workers, and retirement policies and government programs like unemployment compensation. The net effect of these changes seems to imply a shift of reasons for moving away from many traditional economic motivations to a more heterogeneous set of factors (Long and Hansen, 1979).

Distance probably positively affects the likelihood of citing one of the employment-related reasons. The employment-related reasons in table 8 were reported by 50.8 percent of households moving between States in the mid-1970's and by an even higher proportion of interregional migrants (Long and Hansen, 1979). As commuting fields have expanded, more households have been able to move from one county to another or to make other types of interarea moves that do not necessarily entail job changes as they once did.

Most strictly local moves can be attributed to one of the family, housing, or neighborhood reasons. In fact, the combination of family reasons and the housing and neighborhood reasons explained 77.1 percent of city-to-suburb moves, 65.9 percent of suburb-to-city moves, 80.8 percent of moves within cities, and 78.6 percent of moves within nonmetropolitan counties. Differences among these percentages are not always statistically significant, and the simple conclusion is that the vast majority of each of these types of local moves can be attributed to one of the family, housing, or neighborhood considerations.

CONCLUSION

Annual estimates of population changes for individual counties indicate that the shift of population growth toward nonmetropolitan areas, first observed in the early 1970's, was not measurably slowed by energy developments in the 4 years following the 1973-74 oil embargo. On the contrary, the net inmigration to nonmetropolitan counties beginning around 1970 seems to have established a momentum that added population to the nonmetropolitan sector at an even faster pace, relative to metropolitan areas, in 1974-78 than in

Table 8. Type of Move, Employment Status, and Main Reason for Moving Reported by Household Heads Who Changed Residence in the 12 Months Preceding the 1975 Annual Housing Survey

(Percent)

Main reason for moving and employment status	Between metropolitan areas	Between nonmetropolitan counties	Nonmetropolitan to metropolitan	Metropolitan to nonmetropolitan	Within metropolitan area				Within nonmetropolitan county
					Central city to balance of SMSA	Balance of SMSA to central city	Within central city	Within balance of SMSA	
Household heads (thous.)	1,516	804	651	770	1,003	566	3,169	2,585	2,334
Employment	46.1	41.9	48.5	40.7	8.3	17.5	4.5	6.4	7.2
Job transfer	21.6	11.9	16.6	15.3	.6	.2	.4	.7	.8
New job or looking for work	20.0	23.1	26.4	23.0	2.0	3.7	1.3	1.9	2.5
Commuting	2.2	4.1	3.2	1.2	4.5	12.4	1.5	2.9	2.2
Other	2.2	2.7	2.3	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	.9	1.6
Family	15.6	19.4	18.4	17.7	24.6	30.2	23.2	30.1	27.4
To be closer to relatives	4.6	4.4	6.1	6.8	.9	1.1	1.0	.9	1.3
Marriage and household formation	4.6	8.6	5.2	5.6	16.0	18.0	14.6	19.4	18.0
Marital dissolution	3.2	3.0	5.1	1.9	4.3	7.1	3.8	5.2	4.5
Other	3.3	3.5	2.0	3.4	3.5	4.1	3.6	4.6	3.6
Housing and neighborhood	11.4	15.8	7.1	15.3	52.5	35.7	57.6	48.7	51.2
Larger house or apartment	2.4	2.6	1.1	2.7	12.1	6.2	13.5	12.1	12.2
To own residence	1.8	3.0	2.2	2.3	14.0	6.7	7.3	10.3	10.1
Lower rent/less expensive house	.8	1.9	1.1	2.7	6.1	8.3	8.0	7.7	6.6
Better house/more conveniences	1.0	3.5	1.2	1.2	8.2	6.4	12.8	8.7	12.9
Neighborhood dissatisfaction	4.2	2.9	.9	4.3	8.7	4.2	7.7	4.9	2.9
Miscellaneous	1.2	2.0	.6	2.1	3.6	3.9	8.4	5.1	6.5
Enter or leave Armed Forces	4.3	.4	4.8	2.5	.3	.2	.2	.2	.2
Attend school	7.3	8.2	9.1	5.5	.5	3.2	.5	.3	.3
Retirement	2.0	1.6	1.8	5.6	.6	.9	.3	.2	.6

Change of climate	3.6	1.4	1.8	2.1	.8	.4	.2	.2	.1
Not classified	5.5	4.4	5.4	7.5	10.0	7.8	9.8	10.1	10.7
Not reported	4.0	7.0	3.1	3.5	2.5	3.7	3.9	3.8	2.4
Heads with a job last week (thous.)	1,128	580	481	533	838	438	2,163	2,120	1,764
Employment	57.3	53.4	59.5	54.0	9.5	19.4	5.5	7.1	8.6
Job transfer	28.2	15.9	22.0	20.5	.7	.2	.6	.8	1.0
New job or looking for work	23.8	29.1	30.4	30.8	2.1	4.3	1.5	2.1	3.0
Commuting	3.0	5.3	4.2	1.7	5.3	13.2	2.0	3.3	2.8
Other	2.2	3.1	2.9	1.1	1.4	1.6	1.3	.9	1.8
Family	12.8	15.5	12.9	13.7	25.1	31.7	24.1	30.1	27.9
To be closer to relatives	2.3	2.2	3.1	3.6	.2	.2	1.0	.5	.9
Marriage and household formation	5.4	8.6	5.8	6.4	17.2	20.1	15.7	20.2	19.7
Marital dissolution	2.2	2.9	2.9	1.1	4.2	7.5	4.1	4.7	4.4
Other	2.8	1.7	1.0	2.6	3.5	3.9	3.3	4.7	3.0
Housing and neighborhood	10.6	15.9	7.5	16.3	52.3	36.8	57.2	49.1	50.9
Larger house or apartment	2.7	2.6	1.5	3.8	12.5	6.6	14.1	12.9	13.8
To own residence	2.4	2.8	2.5	3.4	15.6	8.0	10.1	11.7	11.7
Lower rent/less expensive house	.6	1.7	.6	2.3	5.0	7.5	7.2	6.5	5.2
Better house/more conveniences	1.1	4.0	1.2	1.1	7.5	6.2	11.8	8.6	11.7
Neighborhood dissatisfaction	2.7	2.8	1.0	3.4	8.8	4.6	7.6	4.9	2.8
Miscellaneous	1.1	2.1	.6	[illegible]4	2.7	3.9	6.3	4.6	5.8
Enter or leave Armed Forces	4.8	.5	5.0	2..	.4	.2	.2	–	.1
Attend school	3.7	3.8	5.0	3.4	.2	1.6	.6	.3	.1
Retirement	.4	.5	.2	.9	.2	.5	–	–	.1
Change of climate	2.6	.5	1.2	.8	.7	–	.1	.2	.1
Not classified	5.1	2.9	5.0	5.3	[illegible]5	6.6	9.2	9.8	10.0
Not reported	2.8	6.6	3.3	3.4	1.9	2.7	3.0	3.4	2.0

Note: Percentages may not add to 100.0 because of rounding. Metropolitan areas are defined as of 1970.
–Indicates no sample cases fell in this category.

1970-74. This conclusion applies regardless of whether one uses the 1970 or 1980 definitions of metropolitan and nonmetropolitan.

The momentum to population growth in the nonmetropolitan sector results from the interaction of net migration and natural increase. Between 1970 and 1978 the crude rate of natural increase (crude because it is not standardized for age) fell somewhat less in the nonmetropolitan than in the metropolitan sector, and it probably did so in part because of the tendency of net inmigration to bring in persons in their reproductive years. Through such a process, net inmigration in one period of time can boost rates of natural increase in later periods.

Because of this kind of "automatic" mechanism, nonmetropolitan areas in the aggregate are likely to continue, for a while anyway, to have higher rates of population growth than metropolitan areas. An abrupt reversal to the previous pattern of a higher growth rate in metropolitan areas is therefore unlikely.

Other considerations also suggest a momentum behind nonmetropolitan growth. Past trends toward decentralization of employment (see, e.g., U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1972) have resulted in extensive movement of jobs away from large cities, implying that a rapid recentralization of population would not necessarily reduce commuting distances to an appreciable degree in the short run. Moreover, the convergence of metropolitan and nonmetropolitan income levels (Zuiches and Brown, 1978) suggests that nonmetropolitan residents may be better able now than in the past to absorb higher commuting costs or make other adjustments (e.g., buying smaller cars or better home insulation) to rising energy costs.

To a very large extent, the duration of the faster rate of population growth in the nonmetropolitan sector depends upon how metropolitan and nonmetropolitan are conceptualized and how these concepts are put into practice. One of the ironies of the present is that the Nation is still metropolitanizing but only because of population growth in nonmetropolitan areas. This paradox results from the fact that all of the increase between 1970 and 1978 in the percent of the population defined as metropolitan is attributed to the growth of nonmetropolitan cities and towns into metropolitan areas and to fusion of other nonmetropolitan counties with existing metropolitan areas. When the 1980 census results become available, more nonmetropolitan counties will be redefined as metropolitan, and the result is that the momentum to nonmetropolitan population growth ultimately leads to metropolitan population growth.

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